***The Arrogance and Blasphemy of the Antichrist

RV167-01***

We are studying Revelation 13:1-10. Our subject is "The Antichrist." This is segment number nine.

In Revelation 13, the apostle John is given an updated vision of the antichrist and his kingdom, which had been given centuries before to the prophet Daniel. John is shown the world's condition just prior to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ to this earth. If you are paying attention to what is happening in the world today, you are well aware that you are seeing the fulfillment of this very chapter of Scripture in our very day. This has never been true in the history of the world before. You are living in the day when these things are now being brought together into fruition.

John sees the Roman Empire in its final form as a confederacy of ten Mediterranean nations. This union of nations is governed by a Satan-empowered man whom the Bible calls the antichrist. The military power of the antichrist makes him invincible on the world scene. After conquering three nations, seven other nations around the Mediterranean join him rather than fight him. The antichrist will be able to enforce peace between the Jews and Arabs, and he will become the protector of Israel. This in itself will make him a significant person in the eyes of all nations.

At mid-tribulation, with the divine destruction of Russia, and the neutralization of the United States by a variety of means, the antichrist will assume the role of world ruler. He will be the last emperor of Rome. Russia will attack Israel with her allies, and God will supernaturally destroy Russia Himself so that only a sixth of their forces ever get back to the Russian homeland.

The United States, when the rapture takes place, will be hit terrifically by the loss of an enormous number of people who are Christians, who are the people in strategic positions that make this nation what it is: who govern; who guide; and, who have the capacities. These Christians will be removed, and their absence will be very readily felt. I think that this will be the primary reason for which the United States will collapse.

When I was in Pensacola, Florida, I visited the magnificent Naval Aviation Museum that is there. It is a blockbuster. Its displays start from 1911, when the first naval airplane is sitting up there on the ceiling, looking a lot like the Wright Brothers airplane, except that the pilot sits up straight in front, out in the open. It must have been scary flying a plane like that. The museum goes right down to the latest fighter plane, the finest in the world that the human mind has ever devised. Everything that they have learned from past experience is on this plane, and it demonstrated its efficiency and its capacity in the Gulf War. In fact, the system is now so complete that the airplane can fly and be kept in the air longer than the pilots can endure the grind of flying the airplane. The man who was our tour guide said, "You need to realize that all of these are worthless without the pilots to fly them.

The United States is a great nation: it has a great economic system; it has great wealth; it has great power; it has great institutions; and, it has a great military force." But when the Christians leave, it's not going to be worth a hill of beans. Without the people to run it, the nation is going to collapse. This nation is going to be neutralized. So, at three-and-a-half years into the tribulation, Russia is out of the picture. The United States is a whimpering reflection of its former self. At that point, the antichrist will become the world ruler. Finally, the vision of world government will be realized. The world will actually worship him, and thereby worship Satan who indwells him, and who gives the antichrist his power over mankind.

The antichrist institutes a world government, and he is joined with a world religion, which will be New Age Hinduism. There'll be no Christians left on the earth during the tribulation to resist Satan's false religion. So, the antichrist will be able to claim that he is Christ himself, and people will believe him. The only resistance to that will be what is left behind by us in the form of Berean tapes and the publications of Christian groups – what the antichrist has not been able to get his hands on to destroy. The supernatural experiences of people under the antichrist will convince them that he is God, because he will be a miracle worker. He will finally produce for real what the Charismatics pretend that they are doing today in miracles. He really will perform miracles. That will convince people that he really is God. There will be no doctrine to expose Satan's great lie, except as people may have access to tapes and publications left behind. Satan has created the religions of the world to subject people to himself, and to worship him. The culmination of this will be under the false prophets, who will lead an ecumenical religion, the New Age movement, to worship antichrist and his master Satan.

Today, the world is moving rapidly toward a total world economy and a total world government. The United Nations has grown tremendously in prestige since the Gulf War, and is now viewed as the protector of world peace. The former president of the university of Notre Dame, the Roman Catholic priest, Theodore Hesburgh, is a member of the political group, the Council on Foreign Relations. This is the group which has been running, by and large, the United States government for several decades, and which is dedicated to the concept of a unified world, and ultimately a world government. Hesburgh, a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, recently declared that the time has come for us to eliminate the veto in the Security Council of the United Nations. The five basic nations can veto any decision about going to war or not going to war. Hesburgh wants that removed so that the United Nations can declare war and not be restrained. He wants a military force to be established which is entirely under the control of the United Nations authority, so that the United Nations can declare war, and can enforce its will upon any nation on the face of the earth, under the provision (Hesburgh thinks) of thereby maintaining world peace and prosperity. For that reason, he wants the elimination of all military forces and weapons.

This is an educated Roman Catholic bishop who once was the head of Notre Dame University. He is not an ignorant man, but he is spiritually ignorant. He's a Roman Catholic without divine viewpoint knowledge, and probably without salvation. He does not understand where the world is moving, and that the propositions he has enunciated are exactly what Satan has in mind for this world. Such an arrangement would neutralize the American Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, with its Bill of Rights which protects the freedom and the independence of individual American citizens. Internationalists like Hesburgh want the United States to be controlled by a new world order, which is exactly what Satan is planning for the world.

**Pat Buchanan**

Please indulge me as I read to you an article written by one of the great political analysts, Patrick J. Buchanan, in the publication that he puts out called "Buchanan from the Right." For a while, Buchanan was the press secretary for President Reagan, and he really gave the liberal press a fit because he would not treat them with kid gloves. He exposed them. He dealt with them publicly, and made them look like the fools that they really are. This man has a great perception. It is interesting that he is a Roman Catholic. I don't know whether he is a born-again Roman Catholic or not (if that's not an oxymoron). But he is a man that has tremendous insights. What I'm saying is that he's not speaking here from a biblical frame of reference, but I am amazed at the perception that he has of what is happening in the world today, which in fact is the fulfillment of Revelation 13 before our very eyes. The article is from his July, 1991 issue. It is entitled "The U.S. of Europe vs. USA."

"'Europe's return to its original unity means that the 1990s will be the decade of Europe, not Japan. This is what we've all dreamed about. This is Europe's hour.' Thus spoke German Chancellor Helmut Kohl to business students in Switzerland. America was barely mentioned. The Kohl quote was given prominence in a Wall Street Journal story that began: 'Move over Japan. A newly self-assured Europe is on the rise, and is rapidly becoming the leading target of U.S. economic complaints. Europeans, confident in the strength of a unified European economy, and freed from the Soviet threat, are less willing than ever to bend to U.S. pressure.'

"In another jolt for the Gulf War as cocky victors, Kuwait Airlines, which would be a minor subsidiary of Iraq Air, were it not for us, announced that it will rebuild its fleet by buying the Airbus. 'As for Mr. Bush's complaints about subsidies to Airbus industry, he can take them down to the chaplain's office, united with a hope of solidarity,' French Prime Minister Edith Cresson defiantly told the Paris Air Show. 'We Europeans will not let our civilian aviation industry be dismantled.'

"Why don't we Americans talk like that anymore? Exactly how are U.S interests to be served by our giddy enthusiasm for a federated Europe. When the State Department was robustly defending the unity of Yugoslavia, Berlin warned Belgrade to halt its tanks, or face German recognition of Slovenia and Croatia. Berlin sees a new German bloc within Europe, including Slovenia and Croatia, and that German bloc dominant in the European community. Chancellor Kohl is looking out for German national interests. Who is looking out for ours?

"The dividing line of the future will be between those who cherish sovereignty, and yet believe in independent nations, and those who think the nation state passé, and look to a new world order where the rules are set by the globalists of West and East. The natural allies of American nationalism may be found among those British Tories who refused to follow Prime Minister John Major, and go gentle into that good night (EC 92; that is, European Community 92). Among the resistance leaders, Philip Vander Elst, who has just written Resisting Leviathan: The Case against a European State – 'A federated Europe may be where we are drifting,' he writes. But if the tide of history is flowing in the wrong direction, it is the duty of any sensible person to try to arrest its course rather than to swim with it in the spirit of Vichy and Quisling.

"Half a century ago, when Britain was fighting for her life and the freedom of Europe, no important body of opinion would have questioned the value of patriotism or the importance of preserving and cherishing our nationhood.

"What has changed in 50 years? Why is British sovereignty no longer worth preserving? When Slovenia, Croatia, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania are battling for independence and nationhood, why would a great people like the British be willing to give them up? Can the British be unaware of what they are about to lose as Europe's statesmen squabble over how much sovereignty the heirs of Pitt and Wellington will be permitted to retain, and how soon they will have to start surrendering it?

"Last fall, a front page story in the European headed 'Summit's Radical Plan for a Federal Europe: Cold-Calls for Surrender of Sovereignty' left no doubt what the future holds. A powerful group of European leaders led by Germany's Chancellor Kohl's and five prime ministers were due to approve plans this weekend for a United States of Europe, which would include a substantial transfer of sovereignty from national governments, and the creation of a common currency by 1997. The plan, which calls for full economic, monetary, and political union, goes far beyond the proposals backed by the 11 European community leaders at the Rome summit last month. It also backs the creation of an EC security and defense policy that would remove member states' existing right of veto, so that all decisions in the Council of Ministers would be by qualified majority vote.

"'Just as a family loses its independence and its freedom if its household budget is controlled by outsiders, writes Vander Elst, so a nation loses its freedom of action if decisions about taxation, public expenditure, and monetary policy are transferred to supranational institutions, a process which is, of course, reinforced when it embraces defense and foreign policy.' Consequently, the real issue before us, when we contemplate the prospect of European federalism, is not, 'Are we going to lose sovereignty?' Rather, it is, "Will the surrender of our sovereignty be justified by the benefits obtained from merging our political identity with our 11 European neighbors?

"British patriots are resisting. Instead of doing oohing and aahing over EC 92, why don't we Americans back that resistance, for the United States of Europe will be a socialist super state that promises to be a protectionist rival of the United States? On the continent, the forces of one Europe, whipped on by power hungry socialists and globalists, are at war with nationalism and patriotism. The latter, not the former, are the natural allies of United States nationalists."

Please notice what Buchanan pointed out. The Germans are championing a united Europe, just as Hitler envisioned for them, under German domination. The issue is sovereign independent nations, or a new world order under a world government and the economic system of socialism. He pointed out that the Bush administration and the globalists of the Council on Foreign Relations are heartily in favor of world unity and the end of sovereign nations. Finally, please note that the voices sounding an alarm about a U.N. world government are being ignored by a world which lacks the perception of Bible doctrine.

This article puts into clearer perspective exactly what is happening in the world today. It ought to bring all of us to our senses as to what we are doing with our lives, because I think I am right when I tell you that we are no longer dealing in long expanses of time. We are dealing in terms of a few years, and then it's over. The world is on a self-destructive course. ... The world cannot continue. Our Lord has to return and take it over. Satan is moving the world to prepare for his man, the antichrist. It is unbelievable that in our day, within our lifetime, we've seen Revelation 13 set up for its fulfillment.

**The Coming Antichrist**

In Revelation 13:5, we read about the status of the antichrist. First of all, he has a big mouth: "And there was given to him a mouth speaking arrogant words and blasphemies." The word "given" looks like this in Greek: "didomi" This means "to receive something." It indicates that the antichrist is acting as a subordinate. Someone else is in charge; namely, Satan. There is a point in time when Satan dwells this man. This word is in the passive voice, which indicates that the power has not been created by the antichrist, but it has been given to him. And now, God is permitting Satan to put his man in a position of great power.

**Oratory Ability**

By the Scriptures telling us that this man has a mouth, they are telling us that he will have oratorical ability to move emotions of people much like Hitler did in Germany. People wonder how a nation that gave us Martin Luther; the men of great achievement; and, the men of science, and could produce that kind of intellectual capacity, could have fallen captive to a low-life type of intellect like Hitler. The answer is because he had a magnetic oratorical capacity. Albert Speer was Hitler's architect, and then later became the head of the armaments production. Speer came from a cultured, upper-class German family of considerable means. He thought that Hitler was a goofball and a joke. But when his fellow students said, "Come and listen to him," his friends brought him in. And he stood up there and watched that style that Hitler had of starting off very slowly with basic little comments, and then building and building. Speer said, "I found myself there screaming, and cheering, and raising up my hands. In fact, people next to me were shouting, and then they would say, 'What did he say?'" He carried them away such that, even if they didn't understand what he said, he had moved them. Now, that is oratory.

When the Scriptures tell us that there was given to him a mouth, it is indicating to us that he is going to have a capacity for words. The word "speaking" here is kind of a significant word. It is the word "laleo." This is the word in the Greek language for speaking which stresses the actual words that the person uses more than the content of speaking. We have another Greek word. It looks like this: "lego." When the Scriptures want to stress what you say, you talk about speaking as "lego." When it wants to stress the individual words, it uses this word "laleo." As you'll see in a moment here, the individual words of the antichrist are going to be very important. He has the capacity for picking words that are going to create an emotional reaction, and that are going to create mental images that are going to cause you to recoil against God. He is going to have some of the foulest obscenities and language ever devised by the human mind. The Scripture is telling us that this man will have a capacity with words which will carry an impact on his audience.

We can illustrate the difference between these two words, just in passing, in John 12:49 where Jesus says, "I did not speak on My own, but the Father Himself, who sent Me, has given Me commandment what to say." There it uses the word "laleo:" "My father gave Me what to say (the content), the material to tell you people that I'm not making this up, *and* what to speak." And there it uses the word "lego," meaning the words: "My heavenly father said, "Son, I want you to give them this message, and I want you to give them these words:" "He gave Me the message ('lego' – what to say), and then he gave me 'laleo' – the very words to use."

The antichrist is going to be an expert with words, and he will bestir emotions, and move a crowd with it. God tells us that he is going to be an expert in getting people to rebel against God simply by the words he uses. People are going to be impressed by his words, and they will be moved to join him in his rebellion against God.

**Anti-God**

The antichrist is going to make bold, confident pronouncements against the God of the Bible. The antichrist is going to encourage and propose freedom for people by telling them to throw up the restraints of biblical morality. The antichrist will encourage people not to fear God, but to be willing to do their own thing. You don't hear that kind of talk today. You don't hear anybody on television getting up and cursing God, and telling people, "Forget about all those rules in the Bible. Get yourself into your personal freedom. Do your own thing." Even our society would be shocked, and would not tolerate anybody on public television speaking about God like that. The closest you get to that is on radio talk shows like Bob Larson, where people call in, and even he has to sit there with his hand ready, so that he has his three-second reaction to bleep what they are saying. And I have heard some of them say, "I'll tell you what you what I think of your God. He is a bleep bleep. Furthermore, He is bleep bleep," and they have a whole string of obscenities that are being used, and you have a series of bleeping them out so that it doesn't go over the air.

**Arrogance**

This man is going to speak words that are effective, and he is going to speak specifically "arrogant words." This is one word in the Greek Bible. It's the word "megas." Actually, the word "megas" literally means "great things." We would say that he is going to be a big talker, meaning a braggart. This characteristic is revealed to us about the antichrist way back in Daniel, when the antichrist is first revealed. In Daniel 7:8, we read, "While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn (that is the antichrist –), a little one, came up among them." These horns represent the ten nations. And three of the first horns (three of the nations) were pulled down by the roots. The antichrist conquers three of the nations before it: "And behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great boasts."

So, even Daniel was told that when this character comes on the scene, he's going to be a big talker. He's going to be a braggart. What is the purpose of bragging? The reason people brag is to exalt themselves in the minds of others. He will be bragging because he wants to exalt himself in the mind of the tribulation people.

Here again, it is fascinating how much like Hitler the antichrist will be, because Hitler also did a lot of bragging about himself, particularly when he labeled himself as a man of destiny. He would claim that providence had called him to a special task, and that he will be invincible in that task. He told the German people, "I have been raised up by providence. I'm going to lead this nation to glory. And because providence has chosen me, I am a man of destiny, and I am invincible. Now, that's a lot of bragging. But he never, for one moment, let them forget that.

The German generals finally got together and said, "We have to save the nation. We're going to have to assassinate Hitler. The man in whose hands was finally placed the responsibility to perform the act, Von Stauffenberg, was a great war hero himself. He had given up an arm, and had lost an eye. When he was in the Wolf's Lair, the final headquarters, deep in the Black Forest, Hitler was meeting with all of his generals, Von Stauffenberg walked in with the briefcase in which the explosives were placed. He set the trigger; put the timer in action; and, then placed the suitcase right underneath Hitler.

As Hitler stood at the table, the briefcase, was in the way, and somebody picked it up and moved it on the other side of a huge leg of an oak table, over which they were holding their discussion and looking at the maps. That's the only thing to saved Hitler's life, because when the explosion went off and killed several people in the bunker, Hitler was protected by that oak leg, even though it paralyzed one arm, and the shock was enormous. He came staggering out. He survived. And that night on the radio, he announced what his enemies tried to do, and again he said to them, "But providence has again spared me to perform the work for which I have been called." What was that work? It was to make Germany the ruler of all the world, and to make the Germans the leading people of all the world. Even at the moment when he stepped to the very threshold of death, he was still a braggart.

This is the way the antichrist will be. This, of course, is the common practice of politicians today to gain power over people. People love to hear what they want to hear. Therefore, they will accept any lie. This is exactly what the Bible predicts that people, in the days just before the return of our Lord, will do, in terms of spiritual things. When it comes to spiritual things, people will love to believe lies. Anybody who stands up and tells them lies will be viewed as a person of great discernment.

In 2 Timothy 4:3-4, we had this pointed: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance with their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth, and will turn aside to myths." Braggarts now that if they lie to people and give them what they want to hear, they will be accepted. Paul told Timothy, "This is what's going to happen in the end days."

I have on many occasions had ministers who wrote to me and wanted to share with me the fact that, somehow, our series of tapes on the pastor-teacher had fallen into their hands. In general, their letters could be summarized as saying, "For the first time, after years of standing in a pulpit, and after years of being at my church, I have come to realize what my duty is – to teach people (to feed them) upon the doctrines of Scripture so that they may be able to survive in the devil's world, and so that they will be equipped to go out there, and when God brings a potential here to them, they will be able to give an answer for the faith that is within them. They will be able to tell them a true record of how to go to heaven. They'll know the gospel. They will be able to take a Christian who is walking forward in church every Sunday to rededicate his life, because he's so depressed by his sin, and doesn't know what to do, and they'll be able to tell him what it is to be in temporal fellowship, and how 1 John 1:9 works – that tremendous capacity that every Christian has to walk with God's hand-in-hand.

They get excited about this, and they say, "Now I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to be a preacher of doctrine." Then they'll say, "Send me these tapes first (the first of Romans or something). And a few weeks go by (a couple of months), and I get a letter, on more than one occasion from this same pastor, or sometimes they call me up on the phone and they say, "Well, I started doing my job, and they kicked me out. I'm no longer their minister." What did they want? They had ears that were just itching to hear the things of human viewpoint. Now, suddenly, they have a man who is not telling them stories, and who is not particularly in their fancies and making them laugh. But he is giving them a confrontation with the living God that's going to take them from here into eternity, and they will be able to stand before God at the Judgment Seat of Christ (whatever the results will be), but they'll never be able to look back and curse the preacher who let them down, because he did not feed them the Word of God, and alert them to their duty before God.

This is exactly what is going to be happening with the antichrist in his day. He will tell people what they want to hear. What they want to hear is: "Please tell me that it's OK for my old sin nature to be indulged. I've got so many wonderful lusts in my old sin nature." If you want to read about them, you can find some of them in the first chapter of Romans: "And I want to turn these loose.

For example, we have a little summary of that sort of thing in 1 Timothy 1:8-11. This is what people want to hear: "But we know that the Law is good if one uses it lawfully." Paul says, "We know that the Mosaic Law is a holy and a good thing, but you've got to use it in the right way. You can't use the Mosaic Law to try to gain marriage with God so that you go to heaven – to try to prove that you're good enough to go to heaven. The Mosaic Law had one purpose: to show you how awful you are; to show you how sinful you are; and, to show you that this is God. Here's His Holiness. And the Mosaic Law says, 'Here's the mirror. Take a look at yourself.'" And we recoil from what we see in ourselves that God demands – of perfection that isn't there.

Verse 9 says, "Realizing the fact that the Law is not made for a righteous man, but for those who are lawless and rebellious; for the ungodly; for sinners; for the unholy and profane; and, for those who kill their fathers or their mothers;" that is, for those who do not honor their fathers or mothers.

When I was in Florida recently, I heard on TV the daughter the daughter of President and Mrs. Reagan, Patti Davis. She has written a book in which she is degrading her parents because they had a dysfunctional family. By the way, "dysfunctional" is a euphemism. It is a code word for an old sin nature family. This is the big thing with psychiatrists. They talk about being dysfunctional. "Dysfunctional" means that you're shot-through with the old sin nature. And, of course, here she is on public television, saying things and making money by exposing the grosser moments of her parents' treatment of her as she grew up, and to which she's attributing that she has been terribly wounded.

Well, she's a feminist and a freedom person. And one young man got up and said, "I think you're just a snotty kid who's trying to capitalize on your prominence." You should have seen Donahue! I thought he was going to have heart failure right then. He pulled that microphone back. You know, he likes to grab that mike. He says, "You're calling her names?" And Patti's eyes got big. And Donahue's bosses up at the top are have a catatonic fit too, watching those screens, and they don't let him go any further. They're yelling into his ear piece, "Cut that guy off." But Patti wants to talk back to him. So, this guy gets up and tries to mollify.

Well, I just wish that I had have been there to point out that he said it in a very street way: "She is a snotty nose kid." What she is, is an old sin nature kid, who is a slave to the worst qualities in the human heart. What is she doing? She said, "You don't think I should let people know about things like this?" She thought that was a wonderful thing – to tell how her mother spanked her with a hairbrush; hit her across the face; and, made her bleed. That's not a good thing to do. You drip on the carpet. You have a nice Oriental rug, and it messes it up. You shouldn't do things like that. She's telling all of these worst moments that her parents had, you know. She said, "You don't think I should tell them?" And there's nobody to say, "No, you should not tell that to the public, because thereby you violate a basic moral code of God. You dishonor your parents. And you always honor your parents. And one of the ways you honor your parents is with privacy of what pertains to your family.

"Who kill their fathers and mothers" refers to dishonoring the parents: "For murderers, and immoral men, and homosexuals." These are all the things about which people want to say, "Tell me this is OK. Tell me that this is not wrong. Tell me to forget the Bible. It was written by men who had old fashioned views:" "And kidnappers, and liars, and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching (to sound doctrine), according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God with which I have been entrusted." Paul says, "There is going to come a time when people are going to want to hear these kinds of things justified for personal conduct, instead of that which is fitting with one who is born-again by the gospel of the grace of God.

So, tribulation humanity is going to be quite ready to believe the lies of the antichrist because he will tell them what they want to hear. Since their minds are blinded to spiritual truth by Satan, who is the father of lies, they will accept it without any difficulty whatsoever.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4 tell us that he is an angel of light.

John 8:44 tell us that Satan is the father of lies.

So, the people of the tribulation, who are already confused by their drug addiction, and who are jaded by their vile sexual sins, are going to be quite willing to believe the lies of the antichrist. God's judgment upon those who do not want to know Bible doctrine truth is to leave them subject to the lies of Satan's man, for them to bear the consequences of their choices forever. Please remember that those who are willing to ignore the doctrines of Scripture (because this applies to us too) will find ourselves in a position where God finally says to you, "OK, go ahead and do it your way, and bear the consequences." It is a serious thing for a Christian to ignore the cautions of warning, the admonitions of the Word of God.

Please notice 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12, where the apostle Paul says, "And with all deception of wickedness, for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved." Here are those who would not believe the truth of the gospel of the grace of God. What does God do to people like that? "For this reason, God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they might believe what is false." God then leaves them to believe what is false. He turns them over to the deluding influence of Satan: "In order that they all may be judged, who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." God said, "I'm going to let you have your way. I'm going to let you run ahead. Then He refers to the one up in verse 8: "And then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming." That is the antichrist – that one who is telling them the lies they will believe. God says, "I'm going to leave you to bear the consequences of that.

Once the Holy Spirit is removed from the earth at the rapture of the church, the antichrist will now be free to deceive mankind. God the Holy Spirit will no longer be restraining evil. At the end of the tribulation, Jesus Christ, at His Second Coming, will personally blast the lawless antichrist and kill him. Then all the world will see that he is all talk and no substance. The bragging and the lies of the antichrist will plunge the tribulation world into lawlessness and immorality as the world has never seen before. We will come right back to the society that existed before the flood.

The antichrist, with Satan's power, will perform miracles which will be viewed as signs of his deity, and will cause great wonderment and awe among people. The unsaved, without the frame of reference of Bible doctrine, will be deceived by the antichrist, the braggart. Matthew 24:24 tells us that his miracles will be so impressive that even believers are almost fooled. Those who believe God's gospel truth will receive freedom from their sin natures, and they will receive eternal life in heaven. But those who believe Satan's lies receive enslavement to the sin nature, and eternity in the lake of fire. Those who will not believe God's truth are to be left to be deluded by Satan's lies.

What is the greatest lie of Satan? The greatest lie of Satan is the one that he told Eve – that man is a potential God. This is what is taught today by Hinduism, and very specifically by Mormonism. The Bible tells us that this divine abandonment of unbelievers to Satan's lies is to justify the eternal punishment of God upon them.

So, those who now delight doing wickedness by God's standards will have all eternity to regret. This passage in 2 Thessalonians probably indicates that people who hear the gospel now and reject it, and then go out into the tribulation will not be able to believe it then. They will be so jaded and hardened that if they do not believe the gospel now (before the rapture), and you go unsaved into the tribulation, God will give you over to deception. That deception is so complete that I think this passage Scripture suggests that there will be no salvation for people who turn their back upon that salvation now.

Therefore, Christians today should be very much aware that ignorance or negative attention to doctrine also exposes them to satanic delusion, and to the loss of rewards. How many believers, maybe even from this congregation, who have gone on to heaven, wish that they could be back here just a little while to capitalize on what they were taught, and on what they now know is such a reality? How differently they would conduct themselves. How differently they would act with their time; with their resources; and, with their very lives.

**Blasphemy**

This man not only has a big mouth which deals with the things that exalt him as a braggart, but he also has one other thing: blasphemies. The Greek word is "blasphemia." The antichrist's specific type of blasphemy will be, of course, that he claims to be God. He ridicules God publicly. He slanders God. He uses God's name in the worst kind of curse words. When you use the name of God in curse words, you are blaspheming. The boldness and the impunity, with which Satan is able to blaspheme God, emboldens mankind to do the same. When people see their leader getting away with it, they say, "There's nothing to this business of the Bible, and of the God of the Bible." And even when they realize that that God really is out there, they are so jaded by the blasphemy of the antichrist that they cannot change.

Notice in Revelation 16:8: "The fourth angel poured out his bowl upon the sun, and it was given to it to scorch men with fire." This is right down near the end of the tribulation: "And men were scorched with fierce heat, and they blasphemed the name of God, who has the power over these plagues, and they did not repent so as to give Him glory." At this point, they know that God is causing the sun to increase its heat intensity so that the earth is scorched, and they spit in the face of God and blaspheme Him.

Notice verse 10: "The fifth angel poured out his bowl upon the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became darkened. They gnawed their tongues because of pain. They blasphemed the God of heaven, because of their pains and their sores, and they did not repent of their deeds." Even when they know it, they blaspheme God. This blasphemy of the antichrist was revealed to Daniel in Daniel 7:8 and 25.

The blasphemy of the antichrist, of course, includes the demand that he be worshiped as God. When you worship the antichrist, you will be worshiping Satan who indwells him. We are told that this is done by the antichrist setting a statue himself up in the Jews' rebuilt temple, and he demands that he now become the object of their worship. Revelation 13:14-15 and 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4 describe that event to us.

So, Satan will finally get what he has always wanted. He has always wanted the human race to worship him as deity. Increasingly, that is being done today. But through the antichrist, and the world government that he will establish, Satan will finally find himself as a god whom all the human race will worship, and the antichrist whom all the world will adore. So, suddenly, instead of God the Father; God the Son; and, God the Holy Spirit, there will be on this earth god the Satan; god the antichrist; and, god the false prophet. There will be a false trinity to replace the true one. And the blasphemy of mankind has no limitations, even now. Don't think that it's not already in the mill.

I listened to a TV program which had an alderman from the city of Milwaukee who was calling for the black people to rise up (I think he said in 1995) and go to civil war against the city of Milwaukee. He said, "I call upon you to do this in the name of the Father, the mother, and the Holy Spirit." I thought, "How interesting it is that the one person to blaspheme above all was God the Son, and to substitute for Him what? The mother goddess."

The antichrist is having the world prepared that he needs. He is standing in the wings. I have no doubt that he is alive today. And who knows but what, in order to battle a perfect reproduction of Jesus Christ, maybe when he hits 30 years of age, that's the day he comes on the scene, and becomes the ruler of the Western world at the beginning of the tribulation. And in the middle of it, he becomes the ruler of all the world – the last Roman emperor. This is coming.

Dr. John E. Danish, 1991

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